

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Carmen Burgos-Rosado, and I live in New Britain. I am also part of the Manos Unidas group.

I stand in support of SB284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an essential step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we all need and deserve. Nevertheless, our work does not end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

I am a social worker who supervises a home visiting program for families and children, and one of the challenges we always encounter is immigrant families not having health insurance. It is not easy to witness a parent, a child, or a teenager who needs to see a doctor and will not seek care because they cannot afford the bills that will follow a visit to a doctor.

It will be challenging to explain to a nine-year-old who does not feel well that they cannot see a doctor because they have no insurance and there's not enough money to pay all the bills that the family will receive from medical expenses.

Society needs healthy individuals to work and especially frontline and essential workers. If families are not healthy and cannot seek medical care due to lack of insurance, how can they go out and work to support their families? I know families that work sick because they cannot afford to stay home; they do their best to work ill but imagine if they are contagious and not know. They will put others at risk unknowingly.

We need to ensure that all families, regardless of their immigration status, are healthy to take care of their families financially and emotionally.

I support S.B. 284, and I ask the committee to please support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of their immigration status. We all need and deserve to be healthy and have a medical home.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Carmen Burgos-Rosado LMSW